



Crop Status Report

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

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Office of Domestic Sales and Market Development

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REGION ONE
Eastern Shore and Tidewater Areas
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OVERVIEW: Excessive rainfall has made the growing of fall crops a real challenge, but growers have seen this before and know how to deal with it. Acreage of major vegetable crops appears to be relatively unchanged from last year's, and like last year, volume will increase as the season progresses, peaking in October.

CUCUMBERS: A few of the early fall fields were ready for harvest in late August, but the bulk of the deal will not begin until September 10th or so. From that point, volume should increase and peak in early to mid October, lasting until frost. Acreage is down a little from last year.

BEANS: The fall harvest of snap beans on the Eastern Shore will get started slowly after Labor Day. Like cucumbers, heavier volume of snap beans will occur to the later side of the deal. Growing conditions between now and mid-September will play a major role in the overall supply. In any case, there will be supplies of green, wax, and flat beans available until the first killing frost. Acreage will be little changed from last year.

SQUASH: The harvest of green and yellow squash from the Eastern Shore has already begun, quality is excellent. Expect supplies to continue until frost.

TOMATOES: The tomato deal has gone from a spring crop-bridge crop-fall crop with peaks and valleys in each sector, to a deal that begins in June and runs until frost. The rising popularity of the romas, cherries, and grapes has added to the popularity of the area as a great place to grow tomatoes. At this point, the quality of the fall crop looks like it will be excellent. Expect harvest of all types of tomatoes to continue till frost.

SWEET POTATOES: Growers are reporting harvest to begin shortly after Labor Day. Shipments will be light as most table stock supplies will be going into storage for shipment later.

WATERMELONS: Southeastern Virginia watermelon growers were all but finished with the summer harvest by the end of August and few if any supplies will be available in September.

CABBAGE: Supplies of cabbage will be available late fall-mid to late October.

SOUTHERN GREENS: Limited supplies of collards, kale, mustard and other greens will be moving to market during the month.

PUMPKINS: As the popularity of this crop has increased, interest of growers has increased as well. At this point it looks like harvest should begin mid-September.

REGION TWO
Northern Neck of Virginia
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BROCCOLI: Growers got the crop planted in a fairly timely fashion, dodging showers to get planters through the field. The broccoli is planted under overhead irrigation so growers will be able to supply ample water if conditions become dry during September and October. Weather permitting, product should be available for market by mid October and continue through at least November. Some fields are just coming through the ground while other plants are 2-3 inches tall. Both bunches and crowns will be packed in slush ice for shipping.

CANTALOUPE: Some very light harvest will continue through Labor Day but for all practical purposes the crop is done for the season.

CUCUMBER: This is a moderate size crop for the area with most of it being grown on bare ground under overhead irrigation and the rest of it grown on black plastic with drip irrigation. Fall fields range from having just been planted to having plants that are about 3 inches tall. The fall fields should come online by mid-September and continue until frost.

EGGPLANT: Commercial production of this crop is generally complete for this year.

PEPPER: Each year, this crop becomes more and more important to the region. This year, growers have put in more acres of bell peppers. The crop is being grown on black plastic with trickle irrigation. The summer fields are still being picked with growers packing large, extra large, jumbo, and chocolate pepper. Fall fields were set in white plastic with drip irrigation and have been staked and tied two to three times. Fall harvest will begin following Labor Day and will continue well into October and possibly into November if growers experience a late frost.

PUMPKIN: Acreage is less than last year and expect yields to be reduced as a result of the extreme rainfall. Growers are on constant spray schedules to deal with disease pressures. Product should be available by the end of September or the first of October.

SNAP BEAN: Commercial production of this crop is generally complete for this year.

SQUASH: Another major crop for the area. This year growers have available zucchini, yellow straight neck, and crooked neck. Some of the summer fields are still being picked. Growers should be picking the fall crop by Labor Day and continue until the first killing frost. Expect yields to be reduced.

SWEET CORN: Commercial production of this crop is generally complete for this year.

TOMATO: The Northern Neck has been notorious for the production of a terrific tasting tomato. The crop is grown under overhead irrigation or on plastic with drip irrigation and is picked as a vine ripe rather than a mature green. The summer crop harvest is still underway and will continue until Labor Day. Product is in variable condition as the vines were exposed to heavy rainfall during the month of August. However, fall plants were transplanted into white plastic with trickle irrigation and are coming along nicely. They have been staked and tied two to three times.

WATERMELON: Some very light volume will continue through Labor Day but for all practical purposes the commercial production of this crop is generally complete for this year.

REGION THREE
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PUMPKINS: An estimated 75-100 acres are planted in the region. Yields are expected to be less than normal due to a poorer bloom set and greater disease pressure, resulting from above average rainfall.

REGION FOUR
Southwest Virginia
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The weather conditions have been good. The crops are doing well at this time.

APPLES: Good crop. Light harvest will start soon on Goldens and Reds. Growers are picking Galas.

PEACHES: Good crop. Growers are getting well into the harvest.

CABBAGE: The quality is good. Pre – cooling capabilities available. Call for details.

VINE RIPEN TOMATOES: Well into the harvest.

HALF RUNNER BEANS: Well into harvest, good supplies still available.

PUMPKINS: 1000 plus acres. We also will have mini pumpkins and gourds as well as corn fodder.

CHRISTMAS TREES: Call for information on availability.

ORGANIC PRODUCTS: Varieties of Vine Ripen Tomatoes to include Roma and Stripey, Grape Tomatoes, Sun Sugar (Golden Cherry Tomato), Sugar Snap Peas, Cucumbers, Bell Pepper, Squash, Green Beans (Tenderette), Jalapeno, Garlic (Fall Crop) and Blue Berries in smaller quantities. These items are available through the Appalachian Sustainable Development Organization headquartered in Abingdon, Virginia. Please call for additional information and harvest schedules.

REGION FIVE
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PEACHES: Peach and nectarine season is winding to a close for this year, but there is still time to get some delicious Virginia fruit. With the recent dry spell, the "last of the season" peaches are ripe and bursting with flavor. You won't be disappointed with the size and flavor of these peaches and nectarines.

APPLES: This year's harvest is well under way. Right now, you can order Galas and Ginger Golds. I have seen some of them and these apples are truly spectacular. Growers are just beginning to pick Red and Golden Delicious apples, so they will be ready for shipping by early September. The nights have begun to cool down, bringing the apples to a nice dark red color. Sizes are ranging from medium to medium large, so there should be a size for everyone. This is shaping up to be an excellent crop of apples, so don't hesitate to talk with your shipper today.

REGION SIX
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PEPPERS: Camelot X3R green peppers will be available until the first week of October.

PUMPKINS: During the last month the area has experience much rain but we still have a pumpkin crop! Growers are maintaining a good spray program and the pumpkins look good however yields will be down. Most of the acreage is of the Magic Lantern variety. Mini pumpkins and gourds will also be available for fall decorating.

OTHER CROPS: Collards, kale, and various greens have been planted and will be available throughout the fall. Greenhouse oyster mushrooms are also available.

NOTE: The Southeastern Virginia Farmers Market, now being operated by the Virginia Carolina Vegetable Growers, is located in Courtland, Virginia, and has corn, beans, peppers, cukes, and watermelon lines. This

facility has hydro cooling, forced air-cooling, refrigeration, grading and packing services, which are available for area growers' use.

This publication is updated monthly by the Office of Domestic Sales and Market Development from June through October. This Crop Status Report is also available on our Website at:

<http://www.vdacs.state.va.us/domestic>

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